



**IDENTIFYING POTENTIALS TO PROMOTE
KALAWEWA AND NEARBY AREA AS A
TOURIST DESTINATION**

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Abstract

Tourism is a booming industry in present society and also a high income generating industry. Sri Lanka is highly contributing to tourism development and it is rich with different kinds of natural, cultural and historical attractions. Among these destinations Kalawewa area which is in North central province is filled with number of natural, cultural and historical attractions such as Kalawewa reservoir, Aukana Buddha statue, Vijithapura ancient temple, Reswehera ancient temple and its ruins, Kalawewa national park and etc. Although there are many attractions in the area, the area is not much popular among all the tourists visiting Sri Lanka. Past literature do not provide much information about tourism in this destination and about identifying potentials in these areas. This study aimed at identifying potentials which can be developed in future to increase tourists arrivals and retention period to Kalawewa and nearby area. Data for this study was collected by 100 tourists and 100 community members who live in this area, using convenience sampling method and two separate semi structured questionnaires were distributed among tourists and community people in Kalawewa. The main analytical technique of the study was exploratory factor analysis. The study found that tourists prefer to experience their preferred activities and ancillary services, accommodation and transportation, relaxations with community based activities, cultural attractions with better safety and less reaching time to the destination from the main roads. It also found that institutional support and internal barriers, awareness and attitudes about tourism and adequate resources affect for the tourism development through community. Therefore, this study recommended to develop infrastructure facilities and ancillary services in the area, providing financial support and other related facilities to community people, providing more knowledge and awareness about tourism industry and it will make increase in number of tourists arrivals and retention period of tourists. Also it will generate additional income to the community people and increase the quality of life of the community. Finally this study has identified the potential factors to promote Kalawewa and nearby area as a tourist destination.

Key words: Kalawewa, Potentials, Destination development, Retention period